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## EDITORIAL

Volume 2 of the *Caribbean Teaching Scholar* continues its thrust to broaden and stir scholarship through offering another option for discourse and critical thinking. The presentation of well-considered position papers and writings that are fundamental to the reflective habit are areas which the journal continues to encourage and promote. This journal thus provides a forum for research and dissemination, as well as discourse. Through these means it is intended that our educational activities will become strategic and highly regarded both among our teaching scholars and the wider public.

The articles in the current issue provide evidence of the impact of the use of new technologies on enhancing student learning experiences and their impact on developing professional practice and fostering desirable changes in the behaviour of our students. We also continue to showcase Tales from the Field where the author recounts ways in which teaching practice employs tools and ideas in unique ways to engage and empower students. The position paper provokes thought on the role of higher education in context.

The focus of the first article is on the perennially problematic issue of Mathematics teaching and learning. Vani Kalloo and Permanand Mohan, Faculty of Science and Agriculture, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine provide an innovative solution to the problem of poor performance in Mathematics by students in the Caribbean. The authors postulate that with the positive research results appearing in the field of mobile learning it appears appropriate to determine whether mobile applications can improve the performance of secondary school students in the Caribbean. They devised a mobile learning system which comprises multiple strategies, game-based learning and personalization for learning mathematics. The application, called MobileMath, was created for learning algebra and showed that generally students were excited about using a mathematics application, a mobile device for learning. In terms of improving performance, the use of MobileMath was particularly helpful to those whose previous encounter with the subject matter was less than satisfactory.

The second paper presents a comparative analysis of the approaches to the Social Work practicum in two developing countries in an attempt to provide an understanding of, and improvement in, the standards of social work practices. Emmanuel Janagan Johnson, Kernita-Rose Bailey and Jacqueline Padmore, Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine show that the social work practicum is conceptualised, implemented and evaluated in different ways in Trinidad and Tobago and in India. The research identifies the conditions and challenges of the social work profession in the two countries and provides

evidence to support the need to seriously improve the quality of the social work practicum to be better able to face new and evolving challenges in the countries.

Surendra Arjoon, Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business, and Meena Rambocas, Faculty of Social Sciences, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, explore the use of the student portfolio in the teaching of Professional Ethics in the postgraduate Management programme offered at the University of the West Indies. The paper addresses the concern of being able to teach values and realistically measure its development and acquisition. The portfolio was used as the vehicle of exploration for a value-centred/principle-based approach to teach professional ethics to foster moral competencies of students. Specifically, the portfolio was used to facilitate self-managed change. The Moral Competency Inventory was used to determine moral competencies and measure their development and display over the course of study. Results of this study showed that the intervention process was influenced by a number of constructs. Among those that were most influenced by the intervention were students standing up for what they believe is right, the ability to let go of their own mistakes and the ability to let go of mistakes of others.

Geraldine Skeete, Faculty of Humanities and Education, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine is the author of this issue's Tales from the Field. She explores the use of concept mapping and web page development as strategies to both enable learning and determine the development of understanding in the English Language and Literatures with Education degree programme. The positive results obtained thus far in using these strategies have imbued her, as a practitioner, with the enthusiasm to employ these measures on a continuing basis and in a more systematic way. Of heightened importance though is the focus on the use of the tools from the position of the two primary purposes of assessment, which adds to ways in which a fuller understanding of assessment as a learning strategy can be conceptualised into practice.

The final paper in this issue, presented by Erik Blair, Instructional Development Unit, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, examines the relationship between employability and the scholarship of teaching and learning. This article argues that there is a conflict between the role, function and purpose of university education and the drive towards employability in the region. This conflict, it is proposed, is grounded in the current iteration of university education which, it is argued, cannot adequately serve the demands of employability. The paper further suggests that a more considered approach to meeting the needs of our students drawn from tenets of the scholarship of teaching and learning is required. *It would be worthwhile to have responses to the position outlined in this paper as we open the dialogue on the real role of university education in our Caribbean context.*

This publication is one of the products of the Educational Research Association (ERA<sup>1</sup>) of The University of the West Indies (UWI) and provides a vehicle for the dissemination of research information of particular relevance to education in the Caribbean context. The journal is an online, peer reviewed publication.

Anna-May Edwards-Henry  
Executive Editor

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<sup>1</sup> The Educational Research Association (ERA) is proposed by the University of the West Indies (UWI) as an umbrella body with a focus on research in all disciplinary areas of education (e.g. engineering education, history education, teacher education, vocational education, business education), and at all levels (e.g. tertiary, secondary) within the national system. The Association views Education in its broadest sense to include, for example, policy, teaching and learning, administration and leadership.

The primary goals of this Association are to provide a common platform for discourse within the educational community, encourage and facilitate a progressive education research agenda, and to provide mechanisms for the dissemination and promulgation of relevant research findings. By promulgating and disseminating relevant research findings we adopt an approach to education decision-making that is reflective of best practice. The Association recognises Education as a discipline in its own right, the best practice of which, as for any other discipline, is supported by research and empirical evidence. A strong view of the Association is that educational research must be studied and structured based on evidence of the culture, social environment, resources and the context of practice. While the Association acknowledges that in the local context much work has been done in the educational arena there needs to be a stronger and more deliberate connection among the various elements and contributors to our growing knowledge of education, and more deliberate efforts to facilitate a culture of practice based on evidence.